

Bulletin

Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners

Requirements for Dental Hygienists to Administer Local Anesthesia by Infiltration and Perform Manual Curettage in Conjunction with Scaling and Root Planing

(Authority: Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, §§ 4-101, 4-205, 4-206, and 4-206.1; SB 602 and HB 576, Chapters 565 and 566, Laws of Maryland 2009)

Please be advised that effective May 31, 2010 dental hygienists licensed in Maryland may, under prescribed circumstances, administer local anesthesia by infiltration to anesthetize soft tissue to facilitate the performance of dental hygiene procedures. To do so, the dental hygienist must first meet certain requirements and apply for and receive Board recognition before administering the local anesthesia by infiltration. Generally, the Board's regulations on dental hygienists performing these functions will be found at COMAR 10.44.22.¹ In addition, dental hygienists may under certain prescribed circumstances, perform manual curettage in conjunction with scaling and root planing. Although certain requirements must be met before a dental hygienist performs manual curettage in conjunction with scaling and root planing, it is not necessary for a dental hygienist to apply to the Board for recognition to perform manual curettage in conjunction with scaling and root planing.

Please note that a dental hygiene license alone does not permit a dental hygienist to administer local anesthesia by infiltration or perform manual curettage in conjunction with scaling and root planing.

I. LOCAL ANESTHESIA BY INFILTRATION

The local anesthesia may only be administered by infiltration for the purpose of anesthetizing soft tissue to facilitate the performance of dental hygiene procedures. It must be administered under the supervision of a dentist who has prescribed the administration of local anesthesia by the hygienist. The dentist must be physically on the premises during the administration. However the dentist need not be in the operatory.

A. Dental hygienists who are not recognized to administer local anesthesia in another state.

In order to apply to be recognized by the Board to administer local anesthesia by infiltration, the hygienist must have successfully completed at least a 28 hour Board-approved course of instruction for local anesthesia by infiltration. Of the 28 hours required, 20 must be devoted to didactic training and 8 to clinical training. The hygienist may complete the course as an undergraduate student at a school of dental hygiene. If the hygienist has not completed the course as an undergraduate, the hygienist must still complete the course at a school of dental hygiene. The requirement that the course be completed at a school of dental hygiene has been required by the Maryland General Assembly.

The course must administer an examination with a written and clinical portion. The candidate must receive a passing grade of at least 75% in both the written examination portion and the clinical examination portion. The candidate must also pass or have passed the North East Regional Board (NERB) Local Anesthesia Examination for Dental Hygienists. A one time fee must be paid to the Board along with the application. Dental hygienists who meet the Board's requirements will be recognized as qualified to administer local anesthesia by infiltration. There is no renewal requirement.

¹ The regulations will be enacted on May 31, 2010. For a copy of the regulations go to the Board's website at www.dhmf.state.md.us/dental/ and choose the link titled "Local Anesthesia and Manual Curettage". Please keep in mind that the Board's laws and regulations change over time. It is your responsibility to remain apprised of all changes.

B. Dental hygienists who are recognized to administer local anesthesia in another state

A hygienist licensed in Maryland who holds a current certification or other recognition to administer local anesthesia in another state, may receive recognition to administer local anesthesia by infiltration in Maryland without the requirement of passing the 28 hour course of instruction. The hygienist recognized to administer local anesthesia in another state will be required to pass or have passed the NERB Local Anesthesia Examination for Dental Hygienists. In addition, the hygienist must submit a notarized affidavit to the Board indicating that he or she has successfully administered local anesthesia by infiltration at least 25 times in the 2 year period immediately preceding the date of application. A one time fee must be paid to the Board along with the application. Dental hygienists who meet the Board's requirements will be recognized as qualified to administer local anesthesia by infiltration. There is no renewal requirement.

II. MANUAL CURETTAGE IN CONJUNCTION WITH SCALING AND ROOT PLANING

A. Dental hygienists who are not recognized to perform manual curettage in conjunction with scaling and root planing in another state.

A dental hygienist licensed in Maryland who is not certified or otherwise recognized to perform manual curettage in conjunction with scaling and root planing in another state and who wishes to perform this function must complete at least a 2 hour Board-approved course of didactic instruction either as an undergraduate student in a school of dental hygiene or after graduation. If not completed as an undergraduate the course may be presented by a school of dental hygiene, by any Board-approved sponsor, or it may be taken on-line from a Board approved sponsor. The candidate must pass a written examination administered by the Board-approved course with a grade of at least 75 percent. There is no application or Board-approval process. Once the course is successfully completed the dental hygienist may perform manual curettage in conjunction with scaling and root planing. However the dental hygienist must maintain proof of successful completion of the course and provide documentation of successful completion of the course to the Board upon the Board's request.

B. Dental hygienists who are recognized to perform manual curettage in conjunction with scaling and root planing in another state

A dental hygienist licensed in Maryland who is certified or otherwise recognized to perform manual curettage in conjunction with scaling and root planing in another state may perform manual curettage in conjunction with scaling and root planing in Maryland without taking and passing the Board-approved course. There is no application or Board approval process.

III. CONTINUING EDUCATION

There are no continuing education requirements for administering local anesthesia by infiltration or performing manual curettage in conjunction with scaling and root planing. However a dental hygienist who successfully completes the Board-approved courses after graduating from dental hygiene school may receive continuing education credit toward renewal of their dental hygiene license if the courses are completed within the prescribed continuing education timeframes.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Board intends for this Bulletin to inform its licensees of the most significant provisions of the regulations. This Bulletin provides a general summary of the regulations but is not intended to be exhaustive. Each Maryland dental hygienist and dentist is responsible for following the provisions of the actual regulations. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action against both the dental hygienist and dentist. Therefore the Board strongly urges each dental hygienist and dentist to carefully read the regulations and become familiar with their provisions. The Board appreciates your understanding and cooperation as this new program is implemented. If you have any questions please contact Ms. Sandra Sage, Dental Hygienist Coordinator, at 410-402-8510, or Ms. Debbie Welch, Licensing Coordinator at 410-402-8511.